9: Stadling--90 E-3 (1898) 1901 Yakut
116, 234, 426, 466, 511

"The Yakut cattle are very small and of inferior quality. The cows give very little milk; a family of ordinary size needs for its subsistence from 10 to 15 head of cattle, of which 7 to 9 are milch cows. The great majority of Yakut families, however, have not so many, and want and famine are very common among them. As a rule they are deeply in debt to a few wealthy individuals, mostly of their own people, who keep them in a state of slavery, and being thus compelled to work most of their time for them, they are unable during the short summer to provide for their own wants. Their principal work consists in gathering hay on the meadows and marshes."

16: Great Britain Admiralty --165 G-3 (no date) 1920 Yakut
116, 181, 191, 426, 533

"The mode of speech of the Yakuts is slow, disconnected and abrupt. They are described as good-tempered, orderly and hospitable, with more energy than their countenances suggest. They are capable of enduring a long strain, and are patient under privation; but they lack independence, and need stimulus: it is said of them: 'the more you beat them, the better they work.' They are apt to fall into debt, mostly to their own fellow-countrymen, for the more enterprising among them have earned the reputation of being the Jews of Siberia. They are fond of noise, song and dance; their improvised songs have deadly monotony as they consist of eternal repetitions of one phrase."

19: Kharuzin -- 49 E-4 (no date) 1898 Yakut
116, 178, 426, 562, 594

The following rules, conceding certain rights to women, must be considered the result of the new views: 1. The wife has the right to complain against her husband if the latter, by his improvidence, is ruining the household; 2. The wife is conceded the right to contract debts; the wife is not responsible for the debts contracted by her husband for his own personal needs, and conversely the husband is not responsible for the personal debts of his wife. An exception is made when the couple offer surety for each other. These rules stand in such contradiciton to the personal and property incapacity of women that there can be no doubt of their later origin.

But when the wife, in the absence of her husband, has contracted "debts to cover the needs of the household or other matters pertaining to the home," the court comes to the defense of the wife and the creditor; the husband is held responsible for obligations entered upon with the object of benefiting his own household group.

19: Kharuzin -- 63-64 E-4 (no date) 1898
116, 426, 686

Debt obligations are protected by the security or depos
in the manner of a reward either a present of two percent
incurred under the influence of deceit or in an intoxicated
valid. Even if the eldest in the family incurred it, the fa
of the obligation. Card debts are also considered invalid,
was drunk or sober at the time of playing. A defaulting d
elders not only to pay the debt, but also to pay the interes
cumulated between the term of payment and the time of ju
the expenses borne by the creditor in entering the action.
are content [64] to satisfy the debt by taking from the defa
clothing.

t of cattle. The lender obtains
of the sum of the debt. A debt
condition is not considered
ily can demand the nullification
no matter whether the loser
btor is condemned by the
on the debt which has ac-
icial proceedings, as well as
In trifling cases the elders
lting debtor his excess

/197 cont./

632 from the Arctic Ocean, owes its present importance less to the rich
[226] fishing, which could be made useful for the more southerly regions
[439] only by the establishment of a steamship company like the one on the Jenissei /Yenisei/, and more to the trade in arctic foxes and in particular in mammoth tusks, which are collected here from the entire region and then taken to the European market by
[136] way of Jakutsk /Yakutsk/ and Irkutsk. Fossil ivory is found throughout northern Siberia, although the richest sources are supposed to be the New Siberian Islands in the Arctic Ocean, but the trip there across the frozen ocean involves great difficulties and dangers, and we were even told that the government had prohibited trading trips there after a party of ivory-seekers perished on one.

161 According to the more detailed reports gathered by
131 Czekanowsky on his second stay in Bulún, the population of the entire ulússes consists of 2,293 souls, 770 of whom are counted on the stretches of the Lena lying within the forest region, 30 in the forest region along the Olenék, while about 550 live on the timber line itself between the Lena and Anábara, and /198/ over 900 live on the tundra, and, in particular, on the islands at the
131 mouth of the Lena and the Olenék. These people, consisting of
177 Jakuten /Yakut/, or rather Jakutized Tungus, are cut off on all sides from intercourse with other human beings by broad, barren stretches scarcely traversed by a hunter, certainly to their advantage -- I have spoken above, in the description of our sojourn in Boljkalák, of the inhabitants' purity of morals -- may it be preserved here a very long time and may more active intercourse and the cultural advance connected with it exert only a whole-
• 426 some influence on these upright primitive people. Up to now --
273 at least so we were assured -- the natives strictly guard against running into debt with the merchants, and liquor, this plague advancing in the train of civilization and so corrupting for all primitive peoples, seems to be relatively not very widespread
273 here. I must mention here that the government does not permit, or at least permits only under great limitations, the sale of spirits to the native tribes of Siberia, as well as to the workers at the gold washings, but, in view of the immense tracts of land to be

53:Tokarev and Gurvich E-4 (no date) 1964
RV2 Yakut RV2

of the toyon. This custom was a very typical and often extremely cruel form of exploitation. The winter upkeep of the livestock was a still more burdensome, enslaving agreement; in return for a head of cattle, the toyon usually paid 1 ruble, 50 kopeks or 2 rubles for the whole winter, whereas in actual fact the upkeep cost at least 5 rubles, and so it was only the poor peasants driven by need who entered into such agreements.

A still more typical custom, the origin of which in ancient times was connected with mutual assistance between clan members, but which later became in fact one of the forms of exploitation, was kumalaanism. A kumalaan was a poor peasant, a disabled person, an orphan or sometimes all the members of an impoverished family, who were assigned by the whole community to live for a certain time with a rich man or wealthy kinsman who would maintain them. Officially, the adoption of a kumalaan was regarded as an act of charity, and a way of helping a kinsman in need. But in actual fact the custom concealed the cruelest exploitation of unpaid labor. In many cases it was a disguised form of slavery and lasted a long time.

Another form of disguised slavery was the sale of children, which flourished particularly in the Olekminskiy Okrug. Parents who had reached the stage of abysmal poverty were often forced to sell their children, and well-off Yakuts sometimes bought them (when they had no children of their own) in order to bring them up, but more often in order to have unpaid labor. Their treatment of them was usually barbaric; they were half-starved and forced to do exhausting work. The demand for children was so extensive that in the Olekminskiy Okrug there were professionals (old women) who traded in children as an occupation.

There were also various forms of commercial exploitation, some of which, again, were inherent in the Yakut conditions. One such form for Yakutiya was the activity of the so-called "city-men." These were people, mainly from distant regions, who constantly made trips to towns where they had business contacts and sold and bought commodities on behalf of their fellow villagers in return for a commission from the latter. The city-men, apart from the agreed fee, could always obtain extra profits by speculating on the difference in prices, obtaining credit, and so on. Little by little the city-man began to trade in imported goods in his own ulus and turned into a full-fledged merchant. This was one of the ways in which the new Yakut commercial bourgeoisie formed side by side with the semifeudal toyons.

By the end of the 19th century, the Yakut commercial bourgeoisie was already a strong force. The Yakut merchants not only exploited their own fellow townsmen, but also penetrated into the taiga, into the Evenk and Yukagir hunting camps, where they gave the hunters liquor and enslaved them in usurious debt. In the trading regions, in the outlying parts of Yakutiya, Yakut (and Russian) trade capital enslaved the people in the most merciless ways.

As a result of all this highly varied and extremely cruel exploitation, the position of the masses of the Yakut population was lamentable. The poor people sometimes went hungry the whole year around, even in the summer, during the peak season when the hard work of haymaking needed a sound diet. "The Yakut does not take much notice of the fact that his children are always half-starved," wrote V. F. Troshchanskiy, "both because this is the normal state of affairs for the majority of Yakut children, and also because he himself, his wife, his very old parents, his livestock, his dog and his cat are half-starved

53:Tokarev and Gurvich E-4 (no date) 1964
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field have been of tremendous benefit. Many hundreds of specialists are now at work in the field of agriculture and among them there are quite a few veterinary surgeons and technicians with higher education. Horse-breeding is also being successfully developed.

The income received by collective-farm members is an indication of the considerable progress made in the collective-farm system. For example, in 1955 the Yershov family from the Red Partisan collective farm in the Churapchinskiy Rayon, consisting of four members, completed 22,500 labor units[1] and in the final accounting received 100 poods of grain, 48 poods of meat, 69 poods of oil, more than 30 poods of vegetables, 2 foals and more than 5500 rubles in cash.

For each labor unit completed at the Red Star collective farm in the Aldanskiy Rayon in 1955 the farmer received a payment of 32 rubles and 50 kopeks.

High incomes are also received by cattle breeders in the northern regions. On the Victory collective farm in the Olenekskly Rayon, 808,000 rubles were spent in payment for labor units in 1954. For each labor unit the payment was 16 rubles in cash and 210 grams of meat; each household received an average income in cash of 11,400 rubles.

Trapping, Fur-Farming and Fishing

There are 22 species of fur-bearing animals in the Yakut ASSR. Trapping is one of the main occupations of the population of northern Yakutiya. On account of the indiscriminate extermination of the reserves of fur in Yakutiya many species of animals such as the otter, sable, and dark-brown fox had almost entirely disappeared by 1917. The Revolution put an end to the extermination of these fur-bearing animals. It also did away with the centuries-old enslavement of the hunting and trapping population in debts by commercial capital. One of the first steps taken by the Soviet authorities was to annul the debts to merchants on the part of the hunters and to prohibit the private buying up and resale of furs. Hunting seasons were introduced and the hunting of declining species of fur-bearing animals was prohibited or restricted. The reconstruction of hunting led to Yakutiya's becoming one of the chief suppliers of furs. Over the last few years the Republic has provided 20-25 percent of the All-Union output of furs. An important part in development of planned hunting has been played by the hunting-trapping stations (POS) set up from 1931 to 1933. These stations instructed hunters and trappers in new techniques of hunting and fitted them out with the necessary equipment. The chief hunting weapon is the small-caliber rifle and carbine. Use is made of imported traps and local self-trapping devices. Use is made of improved self-operating devices which prevent the pelts' being damaged, for example, the "trough-fall." The collective farms equip hunters with means of transportation, tents, stoves, and ammunition. The weapons are usually the hunters' personal property. The advanced trappers in the polar-fox regions have at their disposal 200-300 traps each and 100-150 springtraps of improved design. Many squirrel-hunters have from 400 to 500 fall-snares. During the

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[1] The labor unit (trudoden') is the standard of unit of payment on collective farms. It is set at a fixed rate in cash and produce for each farm but may vary from year to year. Different jobs are rated differently as to number of labor units for an actual day's work.—Ed.

55:Popov E-5 (no date) 1964 RV2 Yakut RV2
Dolgan

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Men's snow goggles.

There were certain traces
of matriarchy still to be found. For example, in the old times several Dolgan families living in one dwelling would elect a communal housewife, to whom all the men were subordinate. Until quite recently, maternal kinship was considered closer than paternal kinship among the Dolgans. The women kept the fire going and "fed it," and also supervised the family sacred relics. Clan organization among the Dolgans fell into abeyance in the 19th century.

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The development of trade and the introduction of improved techniques into the principal occupation of the Dolgans, that is to say hunting, led to the acquisition of furs on a personal level. Furs had long been an item of trade. Their commercial importance had an effect on the relations among the Dolgans in the field of distribution. Products from reindeer-hunting or fishing had to be divided among relatives and neighbors, while furs (polar-fox or sable) were considered the absolute property of the hunter and were left untouched. An important factor in the social differentiation of the Dolgans was the concentration of the bulk of the reindeer herds, which were not particularly numerous as a whole, in the hands of a small group of rich households. This became a basis for different forms of exploitation: such as the loaning of reindeer to poor people who then became dependent on the richer reindeer-breeders, the hiring of herdsmen, mainly orphans or poor relatives, and so on. Nomadic groups were often formed through the congregation of poorer households around a richer reindeer-breeder, who made use of his neighbors' labor for pasturing and watching the herd. In the second half of the 19th century petty Russian commercial travelers appeared among the Dolgans, together with Yakut merchants who exploited their kinsmen.

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Nevertheless, the economic production and distribution among the Dolgans retained numerous traces of the original communal relationships. This includes the above-mentioned collective forms of hunting (cuttings, spearings), joint fowling, fishing and so forth. Although the means of production for hunting and fishing had long since become private property, the booty

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